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Donovan: A Contender Who Likes a Tough Fight

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Syracuse, Sept. 19—James B. Donovan gave a lecture at Cornell Law School not long ago on "The Privilege of Advocating Unpopular Causes." He is familiar with the experience as a top lawyer and today he begins to find out what it's like for a politician.

His job—at the behest of gubernatorial candidate Robert Morgenthau and the Democratic state convention—is to try to unseat Sen. Javits.

And while Donovan's cause is certainly not universally unpopular, the task is formidable enough to chill the ardor of a less-spirited candidate.

But Donovan, who took on the defense of Soviet agent Rudolf Ivanovitch Abel at the request of a U. S. court, negotiated the Abel-for-Powers swap and is now working to free the Cuban invasion prisoners, admits to no dismay.

Donovan, 46, a gritty, likeable man with a vibrant manner, insisted today: "I thoroughly enjoy the ones that look difficult."

"I just don't believe all this propaganda about the 'unbeatable' Sen. Javits. As my friend Budd Schulberg wrote, 'The bigger they come, the harder they fall.'"

Donovan's vitality and his long and full record of public service should be of distinct advantage to the Democratic state ticket whose standard-bearer's flair for campaigning has yet to be tested on the stump.

And Donovan promises a high-level, vigorous campaign against his popular Republican opponent, who would like to cement his state reputation by rolling up more votes than Gov. Rockefeller.

"Fundamentally, my campaign will not have to do with any so-called vulnerability of Javits," Donovan explains. "My campaign will be a positive one—to have people realize that



James P. Donovan, Democratic candidate for Senator, is kissed by daughters Mary Ellen, 13 (l) and Jan, 19, at Syracuse convention.

Associated Press Wirephoto

their interests would be better served in the Senate by a Democrat working with President Kennedy."

Donovan has been thinking positively and getting things done since his high school days at All Hallows, where he played basketball, ran track, won a private school's singles tennis championship, edited the school paper, debated and still found time to win a state scholarship.

He stepped up the pace at Fordham (winning his classmates' acclaim as the "best all-around man"), got his law degree from Harvard and began what is now a flourishing law practice after four years of distinguished war service.

His path first crossed Morgenthau's a good many years, he says, through bar association

activities, another of Donovan's pet pastimes.

"I have a genuinely very high regard for Bob Morgenthau," says Donovan. "He's done an outstanding job as U. S. Attorney and he has outstanding administrative and executive abilities."

While he's won most popular attention through the Powers-Abel swap, Donovan has also been working quietly as vice president of the city Board of Education.

But politics is a funny business and, by his own testimony today, the man who crossed the Berlin wall to arrange an unprecedented spy trade was on his knees in his hotel room Monday night pasting together his own campaign posters.

"I consider this a very challenging opportunity," he says.

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